III.—GOVERNMENT MOTION.

(1) MOTION UNDER RULE 23 (1) OF THE MADRAS COUNCIL RULES *re.* TRANSACTION OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ON A NON-OFFICIAL DAY.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move—

' That rule 23 (1) of the Madras Council Rules be suspended and this House do resolve to transact Government Business on Saturday, the 1st April, 1961 '.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is—

' That rule 23 (1) of the Madras Council Rules be suspended and this House do resolve to transact Government Business on Saturday, the 1st April, 1961 '.

The motion was put and carried.

IV.—GOVERNMENT BILLS.

(1) THE LAND ACQUISITION (MADRAS AMENDMENT) BILL, 1961 (L.A. BILL NO. 11 OF 1961).

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Hon. the Minister for Revenue will now move the Bill.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Sir, on behalf of the Hon. the Minister for Revenue I move . . .

* DR. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I have a point of submission to make to the Chair? We are accustomed to empty benches opposite us and we have reconciled ourselves so far as Hon. Ministers may find important duties to perform when Bills which do not refer to them are considered by this House. Even in regard to questions we have reconciled ourselves to the position that some other Minister may answer on behalf of the Minister who should properly answer them. But, Sir, I should take very strong objection to the practice that is going on in this House in recent years, and I can speak with some knowledge because I have been here as an oldest member for the last fifteen years, that Ministers who are responsible for moving the Bills do not care to be present to move them. I consider this and I say that deliberately that it is in every way a discourtesy shown to this House. I cannot understand why, when the Council has been duly called and all Members are asked to be present irrespective of inconveniences, at least the Hon. Minister in charge of the Bill should not be present here to move the Bill. By that I do not mean to suggest that the Hon. the Leader of the House is not capable of moving it. In fact I am glad he is moving it. Let me tell him that frankly. But that is not the point. I raise this constitutional issue for your favourable consideration, Sir, that you, as the Chairman of this House, must insist on the Minister who is in charge of the Bill to be present in the House when it is moved so that he may follow the discussion and think about it because he has to frame the rules and he is also responsible for the rules

framed under the Act. It is not the only fact. I am sure unless the Hon. Minister finds that he is indisposed or physically incapacitated from coming to the House, his first duty should be to the House and not to any function that he might have arranged at a time when he probably did not know whether the House would meet or not. That is my first submission.

The second submission, I shall not raise because you have been pleased to say that it must be discussed further. But I would submit once more that for considering important measures like this, which affect thousands of people, we should be given the necessary notice according to the Statutory rules. We should like to have the statutory provision observed that these Bills should be in the hands of the Members of the Council at least three days before
3-20 p.m. the Bill is taken up for consideration. This Bill, I understand, was passed yesterday in the other House. Some hon. Members of the Council told me that they received copies of the Bill only last night. As a matter of fact, I received the copy of the Bill only this morning. I think it is a serious matter, particularly when this is a Money Bill. It is not as if an emergency has arisen. It is not as if the lands will all be sold away in two days time and we cannot discuss it after two days. While I accept the position that you have asked us to accept without demur, I respectfully submit for your consideration once more that you may be pleased to take our viewpoint into consideration and give the necessary three days' notice for consideration of this Bill.

Yet another point I want to submit, Sir, is that this Bill is called a Bill to amend the Land Acquisition Act. Do this Government expect every one of us to buy a copy of the Land Acquisition Act? I have repeatedly stated that when these small beautiful chits are passed on to us, they carry no meaning whatsoever, unless the original Act is also made available to us. It is no good saying that the original Act is kept in the Library. There are persons who may not find it possible to go to the Library. Sir, on one famous occasion when an Act was not placed on the table during a former ministry's time, we did insist upon the Act being made available. I think, Sir, you are aware of that position, and the House was then adjourned for two days. Copies of that Act were then placed in the hands of the Members of the Legislature, and that created a sensation. Because, they were then able to understand how the Act that was presented was totally and erroneously presented to the House. I respectfully beg to invite the attention of the Members of the House and the Members of the Treasury Bench to these points, and I hope and trust that it will not be my painful duty to refer to this again.

* THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Mr. Chairman, with regard to the observations by the distinguished Leader of the Opposition, I want to submit that occasions when one Minister deputises for another Minister are very rare except during question-

hour. When Bills are taken up, generally it is the Minister in-charge who pilots. But I cannot say that no occasion will arise on which another Minister will not be called upon to take charge of the Bill and pilot it. Therefore, while I appreciate the points raised by the distinguished Leader of the Opposition, I cannot say that it should be made an inflexible rule that only the Minister in-charge should pilot the Bill.

SRI S. NATARAJAN : At least he should be present when the Bill is taken up.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : It all depends upon the exigencies of public administration. It is not possible to say that on all occasions he can be compelled to be present when the Bill is taken up for consideration.

With regard to the second point, Sir, I am not in a hurry to get this Bill passed to-day. If the House agrees to sit on the 3rd April or the 4th April, I am quite willing to have it on the 3rd or the 4th. When we put this in the order paper, we thought that the House was anxious to adjourn by the close of this day. If the House is willing to sit on the 3rd, the Government will be perfectly happy. I, for my part, will be prepared to have it on the third if the House so desires. Therefore, Sir, I am quite prepared to leave the matter to you. There are other Bills which can be taken up to-day. I, therefore, agree that the Bill may be taken up on the 3rd April 1961, if the House so desires.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think the situation is not a very happy one. We do not expect all the Ministers to be in the House every-day, because it is an accepted fact that Ministers have got other business—not the business in the House alone—and particularly they have to be in their constituencies. This is an accepted thing. But I think this is the first time in this House that one Minister has to pilot another Minister's Bill. It may not be very difficult for the Minister in-charge of a Bill to pilot it himself in the Council. Perhaps this is a very exceptional case where the Minister could not possibly be present. But I am sure however that Ministers will take care that this does not recur.

Then, as regards the consideration of this Bill, if it is the opinion of the House that it should be taken up on the 3rd April 1961, I am perfectly agreeable.

DR. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR : Sir, on behalf of the Members on this side of the House, I would plead that the Bill be taken up on the 3rd April 1961.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : I agree.

V.—MOTION UNDER RULE 21 (3) OF THE MADRAS COUNCIL RULES.

DR. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR : Sir, I move—

'That the Land Acquisition (Madras Amendment) Bill, 1961 (L.A. Bill No. 11 of 1961), as passed by the Legislative Assembly, be taken into consideration on the 3rd April 1961.'

The motion was duly seconded.